

# OUTDOORS

STAR TRAK

## Venus to shine brightly in New Year's night sky

As the new year begins and the evening sky darkens, Venus will shine brilliantly above the southwestern horizon. Observers at mid-northern latitudes will see the dazzling white planet 25 degrees high, dominating the stars around it. By month's end it will be 34 degrees high and set more than three hours after the sun.

Venus will have a very close encounter with much dimmer Neptune in January. The distant outer planet will be visible in telescopes as a faint blue-green dot less than 1 degree to the lower right (west) of Venus at nightfall on Jan. 27. It will be the closest approach of these two planets in our sky since 1984.

Mars will rise about three hours before the sun in January. On the mornings of Jan. 17 and



**Hal Kibbey**  
INDIANA  
UNIVERSITY

orange-gold star, whose name means "rival of Mars."

Jupiter will be out of sight in the solar glare as January begins. In the second week of the month it will become visible to the unaided eye, and by month's end it will rise more than 90 minutes before the sun.

Mercury will be in

18, the planet will pass 5 degrees north of the bright star Antares in the constellation Scorpius in the southeastern sky. This will be a fine opportunity to compare the orange-gold planet with the

conjunction with the sun on Jan. 10. In the final days of the month it will come into view very low in the southwest about 30 minutes after sunset.

Saturn will pass directly behind the sun during January.

### Meteor shower

The Quadrantid meteor shower will be active for the first week of January, peaking during the hours before dawn on Jan. 4. The moon will set around 1 a.m. local time, so moonlight will not interfere with the display. Observers with a clear dark sky could see up to 120 meteors per hour shortly before the start of morning twilight. The Quadrantids will appear to come from a point called the radiant near the end of the handle of the Big Dipper, which will rise in the

northeast. The radiant is in the constellation Bootes, which contains the bright orange star Arcturus as a conspicuous marker. Try facing toward the Big Dipper. If you extend the curve formed by the handle's three stars, it forms an "arc to Arcturus." Meteors should be visible in all parts of the sky, but the higher Arcturus is above the eastern horizon, the more meteors there will be. More information about viewing meteor showers is available from the American Meteor Society at <https://www.amsmeteors.org/meteor-showers/>.

### Perihelion

Earth will be closest to the sun in its orbit, the position called perihelion, at 3 a.m. Jan. 5. A common misconception is that our seasons are caused by

Earth's changing distance from the sun, but the actual cause is the tilt of Earth's axis. In the Northern Hemisphere, winter happens when the North Pole is tilted away from the sun, so sunlight must pass through more of Earth's atmosphere to reach the surface. We experience the coldest time of year when we are closest to the sun.

### Moon phases

The moon was at first quarter on Jan. 2 and will be full on Jan. 10, at third quarter on Jan. 17 and new on Jan. 24.

Hal Kibbey is a retired science writer for Indiana University and is an amateur astronomer. Email him at [hkibbey@indiana.edu](mailto:hkibbey@indiana.edu) or see Star Trak at <http://newsinfo.iu.edu>.

## Application period for reserved spring turkey hunts begins Monday

H-T Report

Hunters can apply online for a reserved turkey hunt by visiting on [IN.gov/reservedhunt](http://IN.gov/reservedhunt) and clicking on the "Reserved Hunt Info" link. The application period is Monday through Feb. 19. No late entries will be accepted. The online method is the only way to apply. Applicants must possess a valid hunting license for the species they wish to hunt.

The application process is now consolidated into the online services website along with licenses, Check-In Game and HIP registration. An online account is not required to apply, so there is no need to log in.

Please note that in this new system, hunts without a registration fee will follow the same process as those with a fee. For hunts with no fee required to register, you will be asked to "Add to Cart," "Proceed to Checkout" and "Place Order." If the transaction total is \$0, you will not be asked to enter credit card information.

For draw hunt results, there is a "Click Here" link on the home page, or you can log in to your online services account. The link from the home page will only show hunts that you registered for when the date of the hunt is still upcoming. Logging in to your account online is required for you to see the full history of your past hunt registrations (previous years).

Properties hosting turkey hunts include:

- Atterbury Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26
- Aukiki Wetland Conservation Area: April 22-24, April 25-26,



Bearded turkeys such as this one will be the target of Hoosier hunters during the upcoming spring wild turkey season in Indiana. (National Wild Turkey Federation / Courtesy photo)

April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge: April 22-24, April 25-27

■ Crosley Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Deer Creek Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Fairbanks Landing Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Glendale Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Goose Pond Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Hillenbrand Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ Hovey Lake Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26

■ J.E. Roush Lake Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Kingsbury Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ LaSalle Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Mississinewa Lake: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge: April 22-23, April 24-25, April 26-27 (Youth only: April 18-19)

■ Pigeon River Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Salamonie Lake: April 22-24, April 25-27, April 28-30, May 1-May 3, May 4-6, May 7-10

■ Sugar Ridge Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 28-29

■ Tri-County Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Willow Slough Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

■ Winamac Fish & Wildlife Area: April 22-24, April 25-26, April 27-29, April 30-May 2, May 3-5, May 6-8, May 9-10

Only one application is allowed per license holder. No changes can be made once the application is submitted.

Hunters will be selected through a computerized random drawing. Drawing results will be available online within two weeks after application deadlines, and an email will be sent to applicants when results are posted.

For more information and to apply, visit on [IN.gov/reserved-hunt](http://IN.gov/reserved-hunt).

### OUTDOOR BRIEFS

#### Friends of Lake Monroe event is Jan. 15

Friends of Lake Monroe, a grassroots organization devoted to protecting and sustaining Lake Monroe and its watershed, will have its public meeting 6-8 p.m. Jan. 15 at the Monroe County Public Library, 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington. Jana Perea will be guest speaker and will talk about the problem of plastics and what we can do about it. Everyone is welcome to the talk and the discussion that will follow.

#### Shooting range hours to change

All shooting ranges operated by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife will adjust their hours of operation during the months of January and February. The ranges at the following fish and wildlife areas will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Eastern time) Friday, Saturday and Sunday: Crosley, Deer Creek, J.E. Roush Lake, Jasper-Pulaski, Kingsbury, Pigeon River, Sugar Ridge, Tri-County, Wilbur Wright, and Winamac. This will not affect the hours of operation for archery ranges, which are open daily, sunrise to sunset at these properties. Regular range hours will resume March 1 (9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.) The ranges are staffed by trained range safety officers and most charge no fee. For more information on shooting range hours, visit [wildlife.IN.gov/3648.htm](http://wildlife.IN.gov/3648.htm).

Submit news for the Outdoors briefs by noon Wednesday by emailing [outdoor@heraldt.com](mailto:outdoor@heraldt.com). For more information, call 812-331-4359.



## WINTER HIKING



Abby Henkel, Communications Director, Sycamore Land Trust

Check out some hidden gems! Here are some of my favorite trails at nature preserves owned and protected forever by Sycamore Land Trust. Directions can be found at [sycamorelandtrust.org](http://sycamorelandtrust.org) or Google maps.

### Diicher-Turner Canyon Forest

Greene County

Follow the rugged, 1.6-mile loop trail through this spectacular preserve. Views of ravines and seasonal waterfalls make this hike a true hidden gem! It provides great habitat for wildflowers, rare ferns, and migratory songbirds.

### Beanblossom Bottoms Nature Preserve

Monroe County

Sycamore completed a massive rebuild project of the beloved 2-mile boardwalk trail earlier this year, which takes you through a bottomland hardwood forest. This swamp habitat is home to bobcats, bald eagles, native orchids, endangered bats, all sorts of amphibians.

### The Laura Hare Nature Preserve at Downey Hill

Brown County

At nearly 600 acres, this beautiful wooded preserve represents the best of Brown County woods. The Hoosier Hikers Council helped us build a circuit of trails totaling 6 miles if you hike them all. Look out for the glacier erratic, which is a large boulder dropped by a glacier as it made its way south, thousands of years ago!

### Powell Preserve

Monroe County

Prairies that once covered parts of Indiana have been all but wiped out. But at the Powell Preserve, you can see Sycamore's prairie restoration work firsthand with native grasses and wildflowers that attract butterflies. The mile-long hike is pretty flat and easy for most hikers, and takes you past the prairie, forested hills, and bottomland forest.

**GOOD EARTH, LLC**  
**WE DELIVER!**  
"Mulch is the building block to good soil!"  
**Mulch**  
Compost, Garden Blend, Topsoil,  
Gravel, Wood Chips & Premium  
Seasoned Firewood  
Accepting leaves and brush year round

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, MON.-FRI.  
812-824-7928  
650 E. Empire Mill Road, Bloomington  
[www.gogoodearth.com](http://www.gogoodearth.com)

Now Open Saturdays 9-4

**NEED EXTRA MONEY?**

**TOMCATS PAWN SHOP**

We can help! Buying & Selling good used merchandise!  
Gold, Silver, Jewelry, Guitars, Quality Tools, Hunting Equipment, etc.

TOMCATSPAWNSHOP.COM  
750 W 17TH ST. BLOOMINGTON  
812-339-1455  
2929 MITCHELL RD. BEDFORD  
812-675-0648

**LOWEST PAWN RATES IN TOWN!**